



TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

ALBERT HAWKINS
EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER

January 3, 2006

Mr. Donald Silawsky
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Petroleum Reserves (FE-47)
1000 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585-0301

Dear Mr. Silawsky:

Thank you for your letter notifying this agency that the U.S. Department of Energy is reopening the scoping comment period for the proposed expansion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve sites located in Big Hill and Stratton Ridge, Texas. We have reviewed our files and determined that on September 19, 2005, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) received a similar letter requesting comments and information regarding permit and approval requirements for project construction. A DSHS staff member, Ms. Punita Patel, was assigned to review the regulatory issues and provide a response.

Ms. Patel determined that the Railroad Commission (RRC) of Texas is the state agency with regulatory authority over oil storage caverns. She contacted you to provide this information and to notify you that your letter would be forwarded to Mr. Steve Seni of the Environmental and Underground Storage Services Section of the RRC. We then followed up with Mr. Seni to assure he received the documents. Mr. Seni advised us that he had reviewed the proposed expansion and provided comments from his agency.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Ms. Annabelle Dillard is serving as the lead staff on this matter and can be reached at [REDACTED] or by e-mail at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Hawkins", written over a horizontal line.

Albert Hawkins